ments in newspapers, that no age is fixed for any vehicles in this country. But still the impression is that age of vehicles has been fixed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why ?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : The impression is there, because, Madam, there are vested interests in the country. You will appreciate that in any good thing that you do there is always some reaction so that this could be stalled.

AN HON. MEMBER : There is an enabling provision.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Yes, there is an enabling provision. The Government can fix the age, that provision is there. It is there because the Act has been made now. Acts are not made every day. Maybe, after 50 years there is a necessity of that the economic condition of the country have gone so good that you would like to fix the age of vehicles. No harm keeping a provision in the Act. But at the moment there is no fitness required for personalised vehicles and it is only, I think after 15 years. An hon. Member has given a good suggestion about getting it checked up with the subordinate Legislation Committee. Yes, they are free to check every clause of it. And they are free to guide us whichever way they would like to tell us. There are a few other points which the hon. Members have mentioned. I have tried to cover all of them.

But let me assure once again, Madam, that our intention is to serve the people, to see that everything is done in the best interests of the people, and wherever we have found that these are causing hardships to our brothers and sisters, we have readily come out, from day one, from 1st July onwards, and I have said that the Government has an open mind for any suggestions, for any amendments, for anything which we feel will be good in the interests of the people, will be good in the interests of the country. This has been our attitude from the beginning and I am once again thankful to all the hon. member who have contributed their suggestions, who have supported the Bill. But let me assure you once again, I had a very frank meeting with all the transport commissioners, transport secretaries of all States, and everybody has appreciated that this has been done all over the country and have said that now at least we have taken steps to have improved road safety in the country.

With this, I hope that all my friends and colleagues will continue cooperating, will continue helping us because of the very revolutionary step we have taken on the transport front, to bring discipline in the transport sector and bring road safety in the country. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : In spite of my doctorate, still I cannot read road signs in so many parts of the country.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : You cannot read ?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Yes, I cannot read, because I do not know all the languages.

IV. International Convention on Tibet and Peace in South Asia

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : Madam, We understand that an "International Convention on Tibet and Peace in South Asia" is to be held in New Delhi shortly.

2. The Government of India have consistently regrded Tibet as an autonomous region of China There are close religious and cultural ties between the people of

[Shri K. Natwar Singh]

India and those of Tibet. HH the Dala Lama is a respected religious and spiritual leader. Our commitment to the welfare and well being of Tibetan refugees in India remains.

3. Activity that complicates the dialogue between His Holiness the Dalai Lama as well as the Tibetan community on the one hand and the Chinese authorities on the other is inopportune and should be avoided.

4. It is the view of the Government of India that the holding of the planned Convention will not contribute to the positive evolution of this dialogue. In its effects, it is likely to be counterproductive.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I have a lot of names for clarifications. I hope hon. Members will be brief because the statement itself is brief.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal) : The statement may be brief but the matter is important and sensitive.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh) : Madam Deputy Chairman, the hon. Minister has informed the House about a very serious development and, very rightly, reiterated about India's policy- vis-a vis Tibet. I agree with Mr. Chitta Basu that though the hon. Minister's statement may be a brief one, it touches upon a very sensitive subject about which the people in the country—the entire country—are very much concerned.

In the recent past, there has been a substantial improvement in the bilateral relations between India and China. I am referring to the successful visit of our Prime Minister to China last year and the subsequent developments which, in fact, have led to an improvement in the relations and have also given a new hope about an early solution to the outstanding disputes between the two countries. In this atmosphere, it is very important that all the political parties within India help in bringing about a national consensus and do not act in any manner which may be detrimental to national interests and which may also harm the interests of the Tibetan people, which may come in the way of the dialogue between His Holiness, the Dalai Lama—as the hon. Minister has said—and the people of Tibet on the one hand and the Chinese Government on the other.

The sponsors of the proposed Convention point out that there are a large number of foreign participants who are coming to attend this proposed Convention. The participants include Members of Parliament from the U.K., Members of European Parliament, Members of Parliament from the F.R.G. and some important personalities from the United States of America. The organisers in India include former Ministers of the Janata Government like Mr. George Fernandes, who is now the Chairman of the Campaign Committee of the Janata Dal, Mr. Samarendra Kundu, Mr. Rabi Ray and, in fact,...

SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH (Gujarat) : American socialists.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA : That is why, I have, at the very outset, termed this as a disturbing development. A few months ago, the Janata Dal came out with a policy document on foreign affairs and that document trends to negate the basic features of Indian foreign policy and goes against all that we have stood for all these years.

In the light of this development, I would like to ask the hon. Minister firstly, whether the Government views this proposed Convention, with the participation of a large number of foreigners, as an attempt to sabotage the Government's efforts to improve the atmosphere in the region, the bilateral relations between India and

China and the present efforts which are on for solving the disputes between the two countries.

Secondly, the participation of foreigners adds another dimension to this Convention. Could it be viewed as a projection of the geo-political approach of certain Western countries, through the Convention on the Indian soil ? Here, I have one question to ask of some hon. Members in the House who have always supported a national consensus on foreign affairs. What is their approach to this move on the part of certain leaders of a political party holding this convention, what is their approach to the Janata Dal document on foreign affairs ? Particularly, I want to know from the Communist Party of India (Marxists). We have in this House Shri Balanandan who is member of the Polit Bureau of that Party.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Kerala) : I am here to support you.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA : But what is the policy of the CPI(M) in view of this disturbing development ?

SHRI CHITTA BASU : Very clear.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA : Well, reiteration is always good. Do you support any power...

SHRI CHITTA BASU : You seek clarification from the Minister.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA : This is a sensitive matter. Please permit me to deviate a little, but since this is a national issue...

SHRI M. A. BABY (Kerala) : Don't try to politicise the issue.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA : I am not trying, but we have to be very clear. When national interest is involved, when the question of national policy is involved, it is important to know what approach the national political parties have on these issues, particularly, how they view the approach of Janata Dal on foreign policy and their open support for this convention. It is very important, Madam, that the Members present here place their views on record so that the national consensus and policy is strengthened and reiterated.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN (West Bengal) : Madam, I do agree that holding of this Convention on Tibet at this time in India will create much more complications in this region and it will do a positive dis-service to the cause of peace also in this region. So, what the organisers of this Convention or the participants, whether Indian or foreigners, will do in this Convention will be thoroughly counter-productive. In that respect I have no difference of opinion with the Government.

Madam, from Pandit Nehru's time India has recognised that Tibet is an autonomous part of China but the Western countries, particularly United States, have tried to create problems within Tibet and to embarrass Chinese Government. There is a lobby everywhere which is propagating against Tibet being included within China and they are fighting from outside for Tibet's autonomy and Tibet's freedom from China. Now my question to the hon. Minister is this. The Dalai Lama is stationed in Delhi. There are a number of Tibet refugees also. About refugees I am not making any comment, but while we agree with the Government that this Convention will be counter-productive, I would like to know from the Government whether the activities of the Dalai Lama who is stationed in India, also getting protection from the Government, are condusive to good relations between India and China; whether his activities are complicating our relations with China; whether his activities are, in fact, contributing to the forces which are opposed to

[Shri Sukomal Sen]

Tibet being within China. So, I would like to ask whether the Government will put some curb or restraint on the activities of the Dalai Lama so that he refrains from anti-China activities while he is stationed in India.

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY (Andhra Pradesh) : Madam Deputy Chairman, we would like to get this problem of Tibet solved peacefully between the people of Tibet and China. We have very close relations, religiously and culturally, with China and also with Tibet. We do not want to disturb these relations with Tibet or with China because both are friendly to us and we have very good relations and people on both sides are coming to each country.

Anyhow this issue has arisen. The problem of Tibet has to be solved peacefully, by negotiations, by understanding, by discussions. We wish that this problem of Tibet should be solved to the full satisfaction of the people of Tibet. We do not want any conflict on this issue. Dalai Lama has rightly said that the problem of Tibet should be solved by negotiations, by peaceful means, to the satisfaction of the people of Tibet. We hope that both the people of China and Tibet will understand this and work towards that direction. We also hope that Government of India, being very friendly and very eger to solve this problem through peaceful methods, will also help in this direction to solve it to the satisfaction of the people of Tibet and nothing should be done at this juncture, as my friend and also the Minister has said, to create any hindrance in solving the problem of Tibet. If we do anything which goes against the interests of the people of Tibet, we will be doing great dis-service to the people of Tibet. Though they are fighting for their cause, their rights and liberties, it is for them to decide—r the people of Tibet and China. We as neighbours must always extend our good wishes and whatever help we can give to those unfortunate people. Lakhs and thousands of refugees are there in our country. Naturally they would like to go back to their homeland and we must help them in every way o see that his problem is solved peacefully.

Taking this occasion, I would like to know from the Minister whether the Government of India has gone through the propoosals put forward by H.H. the Dalai Lama for the solution of Tibet problem. What is the reaction of Government of India to those proposals? Did the Government have any discussion with the Chinese authorities on the proposals of H.H. the Dalai Lama? If so, what are the reactions of the Government of China? Has the Government of India suggested to the Chinese leaders about the need to have greater autonomy? As a matter of fact, this has been accepted by both. I do not know what is the real thinking on the part of Tibetan people and the Chinese authorities. I would like to know whether Government of India has got any proposals to solve this problem. We are not going to interfere indirectly in the prolems of those countries. Anyhow being neighbours, in order to have a peaceful atmosphere in that area, has Government of India thought of any solution to solve this proboem?

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal): Madam, the Government has declared that Tibet is an autonomous region of China. As such, the developments within Tibet are an internal affair of the Peoples' Republic of China. We must be very clear about it. We do not like to interfere in the internal affairs of any country. Equally we do not want that an foreign country should interfere in our internal affairs. That is the basic policy on the bilateral relations between the two friendly countries.

In this respect, Madam, the People's Republic of China is a friendly country for us. The bilateral relations between the two countries are on a steady increase. There is the establishment of the Joint Working Group recently after the visit of our Prime Minister. I hope at the non-official level also it is so. I had an opportunity of talking with the leadership of the Communist Party of China. Our non-official delegations have also visited China. We feel that all differences including the border dispute should be settled through negotiations and in a peaceful manner. In that direction, the establishment of the Joint Working Group is a positive development, and we hope and believe that the border dispute between the two friendly countries will be solved through negotiations and peaceful means. In this situation, we should not interfere in any way in the internal affairs of China, in the present case, the Tibet developments. Again I repeat, the Tibet developments are an internal problem of a friendly country.

I think, the Government's accepted policy—I think so, and if it is not so, the Government may clarify it—is that our Government will not allow the use of the Indian soil for conducting a hostile campaign against a friendly country If that is the policy of the Government, if they accept it to be so—this should be the accepted policy of the Government —what steps has the Government so far taken in regard to certain forces working in India for conducting anti-China campaign from within our soil? Does the Government propose to take any step against those forces working within the country?

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Do you condemn them?

SHRI CHITTA BASU: We condemn them naturally. I do not know why you are interrupting? I think, you should be a little intelligent. (*Interruptions*) I think, this should be the Government's policy to see the that no hostile forces can use the soil of India against a friendly country. Therefore, what steps have you taken? There are many forces working within India; I think, the Minister is sufficiently intelligent and sufficiently capable of taking care of my points. (*Interruptions*) Thank you very much. Therefore, I want to know whether any such instance has been brought to the notice of the Government, and if it was brought to the notice of the Government, what steps the Government has so far taken in this regard.

I do agree with Mr. Sukomal Sen that to have a conference on Tibet would not be in the interest of India, particularly in the matter of improving the bilateral relations between India and China.

My second point is, now, Dalai Lama is in India. I have got nothing to make any wo remark. It is for the Governent to decide whom to provide what kind of shelter. May I know from the hon. Minister what are the commitments our Government have made towards Dalai Lama? Why are we so much interested to provide shelter and other kinds of assistance to Dalai Lama? He is very much a citizen of China. He may ventilate his points of view from within China or from some other country, but why is our Government providing opportunities to make use of the Indian soil to continue or to carry on his campaign? I think in this respect the hon. Minister would explain the nature of commitment made by our Government to Dalai Lama.

डा० रत्नाकर पाण्डेय (उत्तर प्रदेश) : माननीय उपसभापति महोदया, तिब्बत और दक्षिण एशिया में शांति के संबंध में जो अन्तरराष्ट्रीय सम्मेलन आयोजित होने वाला है वह हमारे देश की नीतियों को एक

[डा० रत्नाकर पाण्डेय]

बहुत बड़ा चैलेंज मैं मानता हूं । मैंने सुना है, मंत्री महोदय बतायेंगे कि हम कहां तक सही है, भगवान करे यह गलत हो कि जार्ज फर्नेंडीज इसके संयोजक हैं और भारत के भूतपूर्व राष्ट्रपति महामहिम ज्ञानी जैल सिंह इसका उद्घाटन करने वाले हैं । कड़ाई के साथ इस सम्मेलन को रोकने की व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिए । अभी पिछले महीने दलाई लामा के पूज्य गुरुवर, दलाई लामा के प्रतिनिधि सारनाथ तिब्बितियन इंस्टीट्यूट के संस्थापक गोमे लामा और मेरे और एस० पी० सिंहा एम०पी० के साथ माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी से मिले थे और उन्होंने भारत सरकार और उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार से सहयोग चाहा है । दलाई लामा जी के आध्यात्मिक नेतृत्व में जैसे कुम्भ मेला हुआ था अभी प्रयाग में इस तरह का बौद्ध कुम्भ का मेला वे आयोजित कर रहे हैं । इसके लिए उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार को हमने लिखा है कि बिजली पानी और रहने की सारी व्यवस्था करे । उसमें प्रधानमंत्री को भी उन्होंने आमंत्रित किया है । मैं जानता हूं, काशी का रहने वाला हूं कि सारनाथ में जो गोमे लामा जी हैं वे दलाई लामा के प्रतिनिधि हैं। चीन में तिब्बत को स्वायतता प्राप्त है और हम किसी के इंटरनल अफेयर्स में दखल नहीं देते हैं । लेकिन उसको चैलेंज करने की एक साजिश मुझे यह लगती है और मैं चाहता हूं कि इस साजिश को कड़ाई के साथ सरकार को दबा देना चाहिये । हम कभी नहीं चाहेंगे, जब कि हम चीन के साथ, पाकिस्तान के साथ कई दशाब्दियों बाद फिर से मैत्री पूर्ण संबंधों का हाथ बढ़ा रहे हैं, दलाई लामा के नेतृत्व में हजारों हजार तिब्बत के लोगों को सारनाथ, धर्मशाला अनेक जगहों पर उनको काम दे रहे हैं और उनको सम्मान दे रहे हैं, वे निर्वासित हैं और निर्वासितों को हम अपने देश का अंग बनाकर रख रहे हैं । इस तरह की चीज हो रही है और इसमें कौन कौन सी विदेशी एजेंसियां है ? यह सिद्ध हो चुका है कि जार्ज फर्नेंडीज, गांधी शांति प्रतिष्ठान के नाम पर अपने क्षेत्र में लाखों रुपये का दुरुपयोग... (व्यवधान)... बिल्कुल है, कन्वीनर है । बी० सत्यनारायण रेड्डी जी यह बहुत बड़ी चीज है, हंस कर मत उड़ाइये, यह एक राष्ट्रीय प्रश्न है । अगर जार्ज फर्नेंडीज इसके कन्वीनर हैं तो इसके पीछे साफ मंशा है कि यह विदेशी शक्तियों की साजिश और कुचक्र है । चीन के साथ जो भारत की वार्ता चल रही है, जब हम उनके साथ बेहतर रिलेशन बनाना चाहते हैं तो उस संबंध में यह बहुत बड़ा चैलेंज है । उस चैलेंज को सरकार को मीट करना चाहिये । दलाई लामा आध्यात्मिक गुरु हैं और तिब्बत और भारत के सांस्कृतिक संबंध बहुत गहरे रहे हैं । मैडम, मुझे नेपाल जाने का मौका मिला और वहां से हिमालय की पर्वत श्रेणियों और बर्फ से ढकी हुई पर्वतमाला को देखने का मौका मिला हवाई जहाज से । तिब्बत को बहुत दूर तक देखा है । तिब्बत हमारा पूज्य और विश्व का धार्मिक स्थल है । उस स्थल की स्वायतता चाहे चीन के अन्तर्गत हो, चाहे कहीं हो बनी रहनी चाहिए । पणछेम लामा चीन में और दलाई लामा भारत में सारे विश्व में आध्यात्मिकता के महान यज्ञ बौद्धों का कुम्भ आयोजित कर रहे हैं : मैं इस सदन के माध्यम से मांग करूंगा कि सारनाथ में 1956 में बौद्ध महोत्सव हुआ था, पंडित जवाहरलाल नेहरु भी गये थे इसमें सारी सहायता सरकार करे और बौद्धों की आध्यात्मिक शक्ति को जागृत करे । इस देश में जो तोड़ फोड़ करने वाली विदेशी कुचक्र के इशारे पर काम करने वाली शक्तियां हैं उनका विनाश हो और लाखों लोग अभिषेक करें दलाई लामा के महान कुम्भ उत्सव का । इन शब्दों के साथ मैं मन्त्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या ज्ञानी जैल सिंह इसका उद्घाटन कर रहे हैं और जार्ज फर्नेंडीज इसके कनवीनर हैं, इसको आप बैन कराइये और विदेशियों के इस सम्मेलन को रोकिये अगर भारत की पर-राष्ट्र नीति को आपको सफल संयोजन राजीव गांधी जी के नेतृत्व में पूर्ण सफलता देनी है तो इस उत्सव को रोकिये । यह मैं आपसे प्रार्थना करूंगा ।

SHRI P. N. SUKUL (Uttar Pradesh) : Madam Deputy Chairman, from the statement of the Minister it is obvious that the Government of India have not been

consulted by the organisers of this convention and it is really unfortunate that without consulting the Government of India this convention which may have far-reaching effect on our bilateral relations with China or with our understanding with the Tibetan people is going to be organised in India. The convention may make our position, of the Government of India embarrassing if certain irresponsible remarks are made in it or certain irresponsible resolutions are adopted in it. Although Mr. Anand Sharma has named certain countries from where representatives are coming, I do not know from where these people are coming. Our friend, Dr. Pandey said : "George Fernandes is organising it." I would like to know from the hon. Minister who are the organisers of the convention and who are participating in it. Who is participating from China? May I know from the Minister whether the Dalai Lama or his representatives are participating in this convention? Does it have the blessings of the Dalai Lama? If it does-not have the support of the Dalai Lama or his representatives or if it does not have the support of the Government of India then, it means that it is something undesirable that is going to happen on the Indian soil. I would also request the hon. Minister that our Government should ensure that no such convention is held on the soil of India as it may embarrass our position in the eyes of the Chinese or in the eyes of the Tibetan people. That is all I want to know from the hon. Minister.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Punjab) : Madam Deputy Chairman I too take this convenon as a medium as an instrument to subserve the interests of some vested interests across our shores from the Indian soil. Madam, this convention and the understandable concern of the Government and the hon. Members present in the House at the moment, raises a very pertinent question and I want to raise it very specifically to the hon. Minister as to whether there is any provision of law or any other guideline regarding the holding of international conventions in India.

In a democracy it is the right of any individual to form any association to express any opinion. But, Madam, as the recent times have shown—I do not want to refer to that detail but a passing reference has got to be made about the revelations that came before us in the report of the Kudal Commission—I would like to know from the hon. Minister there is any legal stipulation that a person cannot call an international convention without seeking the clearance of the MEA or can any body get up and convene any international convention as Mr. P.N. Sukul said, to even embarrass our Government on various positions that the Government may have taken, keeping in view the soundness of our foreign policy our approach to various issues in the international arena and above all, the national interest? Madam, in this context, I would also like to know from the hon Minister whether the Government is aware of the likely amount of expenditure on this convention and as to who is meeting the expenses and from where the money has come. Thank you.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO (Jammu and Kashmir) : Madam Deputy Chairman somebody remarked that it is a small statement for a big problem. But I consider that this small statement is pregnant with realities of the situation. The realities of the sitvation are two. One is in respect of or relations with China. Our relations with China are on the road to improvement and even the recent developments in China have not marred those commitments that we have got to improve those relations. We are on that road and we must go on that road. The second point that has to be taken into consideration is that we consider Tibet as an

[Shri Ghulam Rasool Matto]

autonomous region of China, This is very clear. I have heared with rapt attention the remarks from all sections of this House. This House is unanimous, as I understand it, in condemning the holding of a conference which will jeopardise the interests of India. I would, in this connection, wish to ask the hon. Minister one pointed question. There is a circular that if a Member of Parliament has got to go out to attend any conference, he has to get clearance of the Ministry of External Affairs.....(*Interruption*)... The Ministry of Home Affairs of course, is there. Conversely, if an international conference is going to be held in India, has the clearance been given by the Government of India, the Ministry of External Affairs for holding such a conference? If clearance has been given this may be specifically mentioned. The third and the most important question that I would like the hon. Minister to answer is as a natural coroblary to the issue of the statement, whether the Government of India will allow such a conference to be held on the soil of India. If not, will they take steps right now and advise the organisers that the Government of India is not going to allow holding of this conference? This point may kindly be clarified. Alternately if the situatiton has gone too far——I do not know the dates; the Minister will react when the conference is going to be held or if something is going to be held—is the second alternative also to be taken into account that a representative of the Government of India may also join the confernce to make our position very clear on these issues? If there is a plan of such a situation, the Minister will kindly react.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA (Rajasthan) : Madam Deputy Chairman, I am really shocked after going through this statement from the hon. Minister that a convention of a very serious nature which can be very embarrassing not only to the Government but which can be embarrassing to every citizen of the country, is probably, going to be held in our country. We will be creating unnecessary problems. In fact, in my opinion, it may not help His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I am absolutely one with all my friends around here who have expressed their concern about this. Without going into too many details, I would like to ask a few questions. What is the specific purpose of such a convention in the opinion of the Government or the hon. Minister ? If he can reply to this question, it would be better. How it is going to help the Tibetans in general and the Dalai Lama in particular ? Does the Minister consider that there is a foreign hand in promoting such a convention ? How is it going to affect our relations with China ?

7.00 P.M.

Though Dr. Pandey has mentioned that George Fernandes is the convenor, I would like to specifically know from the Minister who the convenor is. Who are the important Indians expected to participate in this ? Who will preside over the inaugural function ? Which foreign countries or foreigners are expected to participate in this ? Is it really necessary for our country to let these foreigners get their visa and enter our country for anti-Indian activities, in my opinion ? May be since ours is a free country especially freedom on speech is allowed to an extreme extent to Indians, we are not able to stop them from talking irresponsibly. But can we allow foreigners to come to our country and make irresponsible statement which are against the interests of the country ? And if it is allowed, in my opinion, it will be entirely the responsibility of our

Government. Why should they be allowed to come there ? Well, with these words, I thank you very much, Madam.

SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA (Uttar Pradesh) : Madam Deputy Chairman, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit has strengthened the bond of friendship between India and China. His Holiness the Dalai Lama's and his people's welfare lies in conformity with the foreign policy of India. I think the proposed convention is organised by the forces of extra-territorial loyalty for verbal jugglery and logical quibbling to create confusion in India's relationship with China as well as in India's relationship with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his people. I believe that the organisers of the International Convention on Tibet and Peace in South Asia are the former ministers of Janata Government and many others. Did these gentlemen then propose a change in India's policy on Tibet ? If not, what could be the possible reason for demanding this now? Will the Government of India review its Tibet policy and make a careful consideration of the sinister designs of the organisers ? I want to know from the hon. Minister whether he will take strong action against this. Thank you, Madam .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN : Madam, this statement is an important one. This should have been brought in a full House. But it is brought in a broken House when Members are not not here.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : It is not a broken House (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO : All the Members are expected to attend the House throughout the Session.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The Minister did not know in advance that the Members are going to leave early today.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : Madam Deputy Chairman , I would like to thank you the hon. Members, Shri Anand Sharma, Shri Sukomal Sen,. Shri Satyanarayna Reddy, Shri Chitta Basu, Dr. Ratnakar Pandey, Sukulji, Bansalji, Shri Matto, Shri Bagrodia and Shri Mishra, for having participated in this discussion.

First, I would like to place some facts before the hon. Members. On the 21st of July, Shri George Fernandes wrote to Shri Narasimha Rao about his intention to hold this, what he called, International Convention on Tibet and Peace in South Asia, on the 12th, 13th and 14th of August, in New Delhi. Shri Narasimha Rao replied on the 4th of August, and said, "In my view, we should avoid activity or its timing which may tend to complicate the dialogue between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese authorities. All of us who wish that dialogue well should desist from hindering its progress in any manner. It would be desiralble to bear the above consideration in mind before going to hold such convention." As I have said in my statement, the view of the Government is, holding of this convention would not contrbute to the positive evolution of this dialogue and would be, in our judgement and considered view, counter-productive. We have heard that a number of people from abroad are likely to attend this Convention. Honourable Members have asked as to why we did not

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ban their entry. They are Members of Parliament or distinguished people. They have their own thinking. We may not agree with their thinking and unless there was anything particularly against them I don't think it is possible for the Government of India to ban entry of Members of Parliament of other countries to our country to attend this Convention. It is a free country. We are very proud of the fact. But we do feel that the holding of this Convention is not a wise step and is not likely to assist the dialogue that is going on between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and and the Chinese authorities at an informal level. We wish the dialogue well. Some Members have observed that the activities of the Dalai Lama are such that might be coming in the way of the improvement of our relations with China. I would like to say honourable Members would recall the statement that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made in this House and in the other House at the time when we decided to give asylum to the Dalai Lama. It was 29th April, 1959. Now we have an age old tradition in this country that we treat such refugees well. But His Holiness has been, since he entered India, requested and told there are certain parameters within which he should function. Now, all the refugees who have come here have been welcomed by the Government and the people of India. That is our tradition. We are doing whatever we can to make their life comfortable and educate their children. At the same time they have all been told that they will not indulge in any political activity which is likely to impinge adversely on our relations with the People's Republic of China, and that policy has been made clear not on twice but a number of times. And that is the policy of the Government and His Holiness is aware of it. But I want to mention that we must bear in mind the age old traditions, the culture, the civilisation, the *parampara* of this country to give refuge to people who seek it, and especially from a country or from an area neighbouring India, from Tibet which we say is an autonomous region of China. Pilgrims had come from China centuries ago, they visited this country, and they wrote in the friendliest and warmest terms—religious, literary, cultural, Pilgrims have come...

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO : We have given refuge to the refugees from Bangladesh.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Not from Bangladesh; from East Pakistan .

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO : Yes, yes.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : This is the tradition of this country. Now, among people who are to participate in this Convention some names have been mentioned . And it has also been reported in the newspapers that some former Minister of a particular Government is participating and that the former President, Gaini Zail Singhji, and Shri S. Nijalingappa might be attending this. These are newspaper reports. All I can say very , very respectfully is that the distinguished former President of India is privy to the policy of the Government of India in this matter and if he were to participate in this Convention, I say this with great

reluctance and with very great respect, it would be unfortunate and regrettable.

Now, on the other aspects that the honourable Members have mentioned, I do not want to enlarge the scope of the discussion and I want to confine this to this particular incident. And I want to say we have in no way encouraged this, we are in no way giving any facilities. I don't know, it is likely to be held for three days from tomorrow in Vithalbhai Patel Bhavan where a lot of distinguished Members of Parliament stay. But as far as the Government of India is concerned, no facilities are being provided and they could not have been provided. Sukulji asked if anybody was coming from the People's Republic of China. I am told some people were asked but nobody is coming from there nor could anybody possibly come for this kind of thing. And the Chinese embassy in Delhi on the 10th August verbally drew our attention to this convention being held and have made an oral representation. And we have taken note of it and we have informed them that the Government of India has nothing to do with it whatsoever. As my statement has clearly stated, we do not think that is the right thing to do and that it will only be counter-productive.

I appreciate very much what all the hon. Members have said. They have all said that this convention should not have been called and the people who are participating in it, whether they be people from India or from abroad, I do not know what their objective is. But as far as I can see, this is not likely to be helpful in any direction with regard to the dialogue between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Chinese authorities which are informal in nature—we do not want to comment on that ; we wish them well—or in the larger context of our relations with China.

I hope, Madam, I have made the position of the Government of India quite clear.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh) : I would like to seek just one clarification. Has the Government of India any information from the organisers or from its own sources about the funding of this conference ? Is there any foreign funding involved? And if so, has the same been allowed? If not, will the Government of India order an investigation into the sources of funding for an international conference for which as far as I know, in this House there is unequivocal disapproval and condemnation by all the Members ?

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN : Is His Holiness the Dalai Lama likely to attend?

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : First, about Shri Anand Sharma's query all I can say is that I have noted what he has said. I do not want to make any comment in the House. With regard to the participation of the Dalai Lama we do not really know. We do not know whether he is participating or not because invitations have been sent by the organizers, not by us. How do we know even if he is attending ? There is no way we can know about it. But we will certainly find out tomorrow.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO: Has Mr. George Fernandes's letter to the External Affairs Ministry also not mentioned anything about it ?

SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY (West Bengal) : Have the Government no information about the Dalai Lama.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : We have no information whether His Holiness is attending or not.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The House is adjourned till Monday, 11 O'clock.

The House then adjourned at fourteen minutes past seven of the clock till eleven of the clock on Monday, the 14th August, 1989.